

מלך אשור או מלך פרס?

אבנר רמו

In the Book of Ezra we read:

כה אמר כרש מלך פרס: כל ממלכות הארץ נתן לי יהוה אלהי השמים; והוא-פקד עלי לבנות-
לו בית בירושלם אשר ביהודה.
מי-בכם מכל-עמו, יהי אלהיו עמו, ויעל לירושלם אשר ביהודה; ויבן את-בית יהוה אלהי
ישראל-הוא האלהים אשר בירושלם.

“Thus said Cyrus king of Persia: *YHWH* the God of heaven gave me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He ordered me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whosoever among you of all His people, his God be with him, will go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of *YHWH*, the God of Israel, He is the God who is in Jerusalem” (Eze 1:2-3).

In the Book of Ezra, but no ere else, we find the term: בני הגולה - “the children of the exile” (Ezr 4:1; 6:19, 20; 8:35; 10:7, 16). These were the people that returned with Ezra to Jerusalem and Judah, from the captivity, in the days of **כורש מלך פרס** - “Cyrus king of Persia.”

We are told that after they dedicated of the house of God:

ויעשו בני-הגולה, את-הפסח-בארבעה עשר לחדש הראשון.
כי הטהרו הכהנים והלויים כאחד-כלם טהורים; וישחטו הפסח לכל-בני הגולה ולאחיהם
הכהנים ולהם.
ויאכלו בני-ישראל השבים מהגולה וכל הנבדל מטמאת גוי-הארץ אלהם-לדרש ליהוה אלהי
ישראל.
ויעשו חג-מצות שבעת ימים בשמחה: כי שמחם יהוה והסב לב **מלך-אשור** עליהם-לחזק
ידיהם במלאכת בית-האלהים אלהי ישראל.

“And the children of the exile kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were pure; and they slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the children of the exile, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, that came back from the exile, and all such as had separated themselves to them from the filthiness of the nations of the land, to seek *YHWH*, the God of Israel, did eat; And they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy; for *YHWH* had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel” (Eze 6:19-22).

However, it is clear that here the writer (or a late scribe) erred by replacing **מלך פרס** - “the King of Persia” with **מלך-אשור** - “the King of Assyria.”